

genital passage, a very minute transverse slit lined by epithelium, quite away from the aperture of the median vaginal prolongation. In the first two sections in which it appears the transverse slit is rather indistinct and all efforts with the high power to trace it in preceding sections have failed. In the eighth section after its first appearance it opens by a narrow duct into the urogenital passage.

In the other specimen the same condition as has been described in *O. robustus* No. (c,) was met with. That is the cavity of the mesial cul-de-sac gradually diminished in size and finally disappeared, and in the forty-second section after this the urethra entered the urogenital canal.

How to account for the difference between these two specimens, otherwise so much alike I do not know. In the first of the two there is certainly no direct communication. If there had been any signs of pregnancy the condition met with would have been perhaps more intelligible. As it is I refrain at present from making any further remarks in the hope of shortly having further opportunities of investigating this point.

In conclusion I have to thank my friends Messrs. Baker, Morley, and Webb for assistance in getting specimens and in other ways. I have also to thank Mr. Ramsay, F.L.S., of the Museum for his kind help in determining the species to which one of my specimens belonged.

DESCRIPTION OF TWO NEW SPECIES OF SNAKES.

BY THE HON. WILLIAM MACLEAY, F.L.S.

In the following paper I give the descriptions of two Snakes recently sent to Mr. E. P. Ramsay by his brother Mr. James Ramsay, both specimens taken on his station near Fort Bourke.

The first is one of the very venomous Family of *Elapidæ*, and is so distinct in many respects from all of the genus *Diemenia*

hitherto seen, that it is with some reluctance that I place it under that genus. The other snake is of the Family *Pythonidae* and is I think not a full grown specimen. Both species are probably inhabitants of the great plains of the interior only, as they differ very much from the species usually found in the coast and mountain country of Australia.

DIEMENIA FEROX.

Scales in 23 rows.

Anal plates 2.

Abdominal plates 235.

Subcaudal plates $\frac{6}{6} \frac{0}{0}$.

Total length 82 inches.

Length of head $1\frac{3}{4}$ inch.

Length of tail 12.

Body cylindrical and moderately robust; tail tapering and rather short. Head short, broad, rather depressed and very broadly rounded at the muzzle. The rostral shield is broad and low; the anterior frontals are very much smaller than the posterior, the lateral angle of these touches the second labial shield between the anterior ocular and nasal shields; the vertical shield is rounded and narrowed behind, and is longer than its width at the base; the superciliaries are shorter and narrower than the vertical; the anterior ocular is large and divided throughout by a very deep longitudinal groove; the lower posterior ocular is elongate, the last upper labial is very large. The scales are small and convex behind the head, becoming more elongate on the body, those nearest the ventral plates being much broader, but always less broad than in other species of *Diemenia*. The colour of the head and all the body except the abdominal and subcaudal plates, is of a glossy black, the ventral surface is of a yellowish-white. The poison fang is large and on each side of the lower jaw there is a series of long sharp teeth.

This is the most formidable looking of all the venomous Australian snakes I have seen, and the broad bull dog-like head adds materially to the ferocity of its appearance.

ASPIDIOTES RAMSAYI,

Scales in 53 rows.

Abdominal plates 293.

Subcaudal plates $48\frac{1}{2}$.

Anal plates 2.

Total length 75 inches.

Length of tail 9 inches.

Length of head 3 inches.

Body robust and compressed, tail tapering, moderately long. Head large, the occiput broad, rather convex and covered with small scales. The rostral shield is pointed above, there are three pairs of frontal shields, the second pair longest and not distinctly divided; the vertical is large and hexagonal and not longer than broad, there are two loreals; the eye is surrounded by nine shields including the superciliary, there are 14 upper labials, all higher than long; the first seven of the lower labials are narrow. The colour is of a greyish-brown variegated with indistinct darker brown bands and spots over the entire upper surface from the head to the tail; the ventral plates are yellowish, the basal portion of each plate being dusky.

The genus *Aspidiotes* was founded by the late Mr. Krefft for the reception of a species which he named *melanocephalus* ("Snakes of Australia, page 23, plates 3 and 5 fig. 4.") and which came originally from Port Denison, though subsequently found in other parts of North Eastern Queensland. The species now described is very distinct, but the generic characters are sufficiently near to justify my placing them together.
